

# WILDLIFE PROFILES



## Moose (*Alces alces*)

**Range:** In North America, moose can be found across most of Canada, Alaska and the Northern United States. In Wyoming, moose are found in the mountain ranges of northwestern and western part of the state, as well as the Bighorn Mountains, Snowy Range Mountains and Sierra Madre Mountains.

**Size:** Moose are large, dark brown, and have long legs. Male moose, called a bull, in Wyoming can weigh up to 800 pounds and 7 feet tall. Female moose, called a cow, are usually a bit smaller than bulls.

**Habitat:** Moose like to spend their time near lakes, ponds or rivers where their favorite foods grow. In the summer, they might spend more time in forests with pine or fir trees in order to stay cool in the shade.

**Young:** Baby moose are called “calves.” Cows usually have one calf at a time in the late spring, around May.

Moose calves weigh around 24 to 35 pounds at birth. Calves stay with their mother until new calves are born. Calves grow quickly, and can weigh 300 to 400 pounds by their first fall.

**Predators:** Healthy adult moose do not face predators often due to their large size. Wolves and grizzly bears can sometimes kill and eat weak adults or young calves.

**Food:** Moose are browsers, which means they like to eat the leaves, twigs, bark and buds of plants like willows and aspens. In the summer, moose will eat plants that live in the water including water lilies. Moose eat 40 to 60 pounds of food daily.

**Did you know?** The bell shaped flap of skin and hair that hangs down from a moose’s throat is called a dewlap or bell.

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## Pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*)

**Range:** Pronghorn are only found in western North America from southern Canada into northern Mexico. They can be found as far east as Kansas and as far west as Oregon.

**Size:** Pronghorn are about 3 ½ feet tall at the shoulder and weigh between 90 and 120 pounds.

**Habitat:** Pronghorn live mostly in open grasslands, deserts and sage brush. Some pronghorn also undergo some of the longest migrations, which is when they move long distances from one place to another, in North America. They travel from southwestern Wyoming to northwestern Wyoming.

**Young:** Pronghorn give birth to one or two fawns at a time. When they are born they have almost no smell and hide in the grass

so predators can't find them. After a week of hiding they will join the herd. By the time they join the herd they are already faster than any human ever!

**Predators:** Being the fastest land animal in North America and the second fastest in the world makes them pretty hard to catch, but occasionally they can be. They have been known to be eaten by coyotes, cougars, wolves, bears and eagles.

**Food:** Pronghorn love eating plants! In fact they are herbivores, which is an animal that eats only plants. Pronghorn are known to eat grass, shrubs and even cactus.

**Did you know?** Pronghorn are the fastest land animal in North America, reaching speeds of over 50 miles per hour!



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## Bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis*)

**Range:** Bighorn sheep can be found across a large portion of western North America, from the Rocky Mountains in Canada to the deserts of the Southwestern United States and even down into Mexico.

**Size:** Bighorn sheep are about 3 feet tall at the shoulder and 4 feet long. On average, they weigh 150 to 300 pounds. Adult females are smaller than males.

**Habitat:** Alpine meadows, grassy mountain slopes, and foothills below rugged, rocky cliffs.

**Young:** Female bighorn sheep (called ewes) typically have one lamb each spring that nurses for 4-6 months.

**Predators:** Their most common predator is the

mountain lion, and eagles occasionally prey upon young bighorn sheep.

**Food:** Bighorn sheep eat grasses, forbs (flowering plants), as well as buds and twigs of shrubs and small trees.

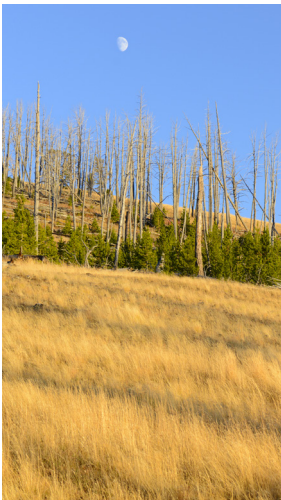
**Did you know?** Each fall, male bighorn sheep, called rams, battle for the right to mate by ramming their big horns against each other at speeds of up to 20 mile per hour until one of them backs down. Bighorn sheep skulls have a special design to cushion these head-on collisions. The male bighorn sheep's horns can weigh 30 pounds! Female bighorn sheep also have horns, but they are much smaller.



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## White-tailed Deer



**Range:** The white-tailed deer is found across North America, especially east of the Rocky Mountains.

**Size:** White-tailed deer weigh about 80-180 pounds with females being slightly smaller than males.

**Habitat:** White-tailed deer tend to be found in foothills and valleys near streams and rivers, often near agricultural lands.

**Young:** Females give birth to 1 or 2 fawns (baby deer) in the springtime. These fawns start out with spotted coats to help them camouflage, which is another way to say that they blend in with their surroundings.

**Predators:** Mountain lions and wolves will usually eat adult deer while coyotes, bears

and golden eagles prefer to eat fawns.

**Food:** White-tailed deer are herbivores, meaning they eat only plants. These include grasses, leafy plants, shrubs, and new twigs and buds on trees such as willows and aspens.

**Did you know?** White-tailed deer also benefit from wildfires. If fires do not pass through nature, big trees and shrubs can start to take over grassy areas. This is bad news for animals like deer that eat grass, leafy plants called forbs, new growth on shrubs, and younger trees. So, when fires do pass through a forest, they remove lots of thick, built up brush and allow lots of new grass and little bushes to grow that the deer love to eat!